3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
F311? Ngoni F311?

helped with a real divinity, which the limitations to which he has to submit, and the independence of the once-subordinate chiefs, have not yet destroyed. He remains pre-eminently the man of prayer, who carries to the ancestral spirits the petitions of the community, and speaks to them with an authority which no other possesses.

For excelling in power and authority even the greatest of the chiefs were, and, shorn of much of their glory are, the *amakandwa*, the councillors of Chungu. These men are in many cases chiefs of high rank, but even when they are not so, their position endows them with great influence and authority. The principal duties of the councillors were to put the reigning Chungu to death when he became seriously ill, a duty which has necessarily lapsed under British rule; to select, with the help of divination, his successor; to instruct him in his duties, to advise him in all matters which demand decision; and to depose him if he is unsatisfactory.

The health of the priest-king and the welfare of the whole community were inseparably bound up together. A Chungu in health and vigour meant a land yielding its fruits, rain coming in its season, evil averted. But a weak and ailing Chungu meant disasters of many kinds. Smaller illnesses Chungu, very excusably, concealed from his councillors, hoping that his ancestors would hear the prayers which he offered secretly by night. But when serious illness overtook him, the councillors were called to a full meeting by those who were about the person of the

3: Mochenzie M-S (ca. 1923) 1925
FN17 Mgonde FN17

chief. For Chungo must not die a natural death; the land would be cursed into water should such a calamity be allowed to happen. Having decided that the illness is really grave, the councillors, one by one, give their voice in the formula, "*Like as maize*," literally, *day and year*; but actually meaning, "Does God die?" In solemn procession these terrible persons enter the house, and, having turned out the chief's wives, lay him down on the floor. Two keep him in that posture, while a third stops his breath by holding his mouth and nostrils, a fourth meanwhile gently slapping him all over the body until the life has gone out of him.

No announcement of the death was made. One of the councillors lived in the royal dwelling, so that if any came to consult Chungo a response might be given, and as he was rarely seen by common men, it was easy to keep up the deception. The councillors with their own hands digged the grave, and on their shoulders, at midnight, carried the body, anointed with lion fat, and enswathed in cloth, to the place of burial. Six or eight slaves, who did not return, went with them. Four went down into the grave to receive the body of their dead master, two at the head and two at the feet, and, in sitting position, held him in their arms. The remaining slaves being placed on the top, the soil was filled in on living and dead.

After the lapse of about a month, a big iron drum, now lost, was beaten, and it conveyed only one message to the people. "*Kaskia ku Mpkande*," Mpkande (the royal residence) has done its work;

3: Mashonaia M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
FNU? Ngoasha FNU?

Changa is dead. Then the chiefs and their men, fully armed, gathered to the mourning. Weeping there was none, for Changa must not be wept for: and women were not present, for the mourning for Changa is war; quarrels may break out among the men, and there may be many deaths before the mourning is over. The chiefs bring oxen for the feast, and gifts of ivory to be laid up in the house where Changa goes to pray when he prays alone. 643 649 766

The councillors now address themselves to the task of selecting a successor. There are no candidates; for not only must Changa himself be helped out of the world, but all his sons, born after his accession, are put to death at birth. Daughters are allowed to live, and sons born before their father attained to the chief dignity, are not under the ban. Here again British rule steps in, but British rule has not yet been able to sweep all fear of the past out of the minds of the people. From among the *Rakwenge*, a circle of families within which the new Changa must be found, name after name is presented to the spirits by the diviner, and when the divining rod indicates that the right name has been presented, the formula is uttered, "*Hapasi hinke*," the underworld has spoken. 643 647 781

At a great feast, at which all men of royal blood must be present, Mabwa, one of the councillors, by hereditary right offers prayer to the spirits, as if the selection had not already been made: 643 645

"Ye chiefs, we pray you to show us our lord, who shall be our leader in all things. Let him be the man of your appointing, not of our desire; to

J. Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngoodo FN17

643 whom all the land shall look; who shall go to the
645 holy place to pray for us, who shall guard the sacred objects of kwibhip. Let him be our food and our shield; let his name be mercy for all. I pray to you, chiefs of the past, ye who kill or save alive."

Mulwa, carrying in his hand the "rod of kwibhip," stands out and looks around on the assembled chiefs. Suddenly he throws the rod at the man selected. Immediately he is seized, with a shout of triumph, "He is our food and our shield." The wailing of his female relatives, who weep as for a dead man, is drowned in the shouting and drumming with which the new Chungu is brought to the sacred house, where he is anointed with lion fat, and seated on the lion skins with which the house is carpeted. In this house are kept all the objects of which he is guardian, the tails of eland, zebra, buffalo, elephant, containing the medicine made from the body of the great snake *inyifwiva*; skins and heads of lions; ivory, cloth, and the rod of kwibhip.

643 After about three months of strict seclusion, during which his health is carefully noted, lest, being a weakling, he should be a menace to the land, the new ruler is brought to the dwelling which in the meantime has been built for him, and his reign is fairly begun.

643 The person of Chungu was regarded with extra-
644 ordinary reverence. He was not approached by the common people, who were not allowed even to see the man who speaks with God. An immense

J: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1923) 1925
F3817 Ngoni Ade F3817

643 "Ho, ho, ho, we go to him who kills and saves alive."
644 On arrival, such as had the honour of a personal interview, received his blessing, "May God be gracious to you"; the visitor lying on his back and clapping hands. At parting, perhaps a month later, he was pressed to stay, but the parting benediction was given: "God be with you. May lion and leopard and hyena, snake and tree and personal enemy, be still before you. May you find your family in health." Then taking water, and squirting it from his mouth, he prayed the spirits to care for the departing guest.

643 The duties and powers of Chongo, as they were in the past, and, in diminished glory and extent, still are, may be briefly stated.

1. First and foremost, Chongo is the man who speaks with God, and offers up the prayers of the community in time of war, pestilence, drought, or famine.

[787] 2. Dreams by the official dreamers were brought to him by the councillors, and measures taken to meet the approaching evil by offerings at the graves of his ancestors, and by personal intercession.

3. After consulting his ancestors, he decided questions of peace or war.

643 4. Along with his councillors he heard important
● 644 lawsuits, and appeals against the decisions of other chiefs.

5. He confirmed in their position subordinate chiefs when recommended by his council to do so.

6. The whole land being his, he gave possessions to

3: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
F7817 Ngoni F7817

new-comers, and drove out undesirables; but always 643
with the concurrence of the council. 645

7. He gave periodical feasts to all chiefs and their followers.

8. In general, it was the duty of Chungu to keep the land in peace; but no decision of his was valid without the approval of his council.

In the north, across the Songwe, the failure to 643
attain unity of control had as its natural consequence the failure to attain the same imposing ceremonial as at Kasungu. The chiefs each retained his independence, and what has now to be said applies equally to the independent chiefs of the north, and to those of the south who were at one time under the dominion of Chungu.

A convenient starting-point is the installation of 643
the heir and successor of a chief. The installation of 644
Reuben, which began on 18th September, and ended 796
on 19th November, 1911, is typical of all, and the description which follows was given to me by himself.

On the appointed day he left his home, and accompanied by eight young men who were to be his subordinate chiefs, and official dressers, and all the young men of his father's principal village, he went to the place which was to be the site of his own village. There good huts were built for him and the eight young chiefs, and mere shelters for the others. The first item in a long ceremonial was the tree-planting. The medicine man took two pots into which he put two *inkhipita* (lion-making medicines), and having filled the pots with earth, he planted a young